

Both sides affirmed that there is an urgent need to achieve genuine progress in the Arab-Israeli peace process in order to reach a lasting, comprehensive and just peace in the Middle East. Such a comprehensive peace should be based upon UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and the land-for-peace principle in addition to the fulfillment by both sides of their obligations under the Oslo Accords. The UAE side expressed its concern about the Israeli Government's policy toward the peace process and the rights of the Palestinian people. The two sides also agreed on the importance of achieving progress on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks.

Today, Crown Prince Khalifa and Vice President Gore announced the UAE's acquisition of 80 F-16 Block 60 fighters from the United

States as a significant step towards strengthening the UAE's defense capabilities. In essence, the deal will enable the UAE to achieve a credible and effective defense through the establishment of a conventional deterrent capability based on quality. This acquisition will allow the two countries not only to add a significant stabilizing element to the overall strategic balance in the region but also to further strengthen and fortify the already close security relations between the two countries.

President Clinton conveyed his sincere greetings to the President of the UAE, His Highness Shaikh Zayid bin Sultan Al Nahyan, wishing him good health and long life.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Statement on Senate Action on Agricultural Research Legislation

May 12, 1998

I am very pleased that the Senate today passed with an overwhelming majority the bipartisan conference report on the agriculture research bill. This vital legislation makes needed reforms and provides funding in several areas that are priorities for my administration. The legislation provides important benefits to America's farmers and to those who have come to this country seeking a brighter future. I would

like to extend my warm gratitude to Senators Lugar and Harkin for their vision and hard work stewarding a bill that ably balances crop insurance, agriculture research, rural development, and Food Stamps for legal immigrants in need.

The last hurdle that remains for this bill is for the House of Representatives to pass the conference report. I urge the House to act quickly on this legislation.

Remarks Following Discussions With Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany and an Exchange With Reporters in Potsdam, Germany

May 13, 1998

Chancellor Kohl. Mr. President, dear Bill, it is a great pleasure and a great honor for me to welcome the President of the United States to this historic place, and at this historic time, and to welcome him on behalf of the German people, on behalf of the German friends.

We talked about this earlier today, and I tried to explain the importance of the day and the fact that you have come here today, after what's happened in the second half of our century. You, as the President of the United States of

America, you've come here to also see to the reunited Germany. So it's not just one of similar events, not one of similar days, because when the last American President came to Potsdam, he came on the occasion of the Potsdam Conference in 1945, and at that time, Germany—and the chances of Germany belonging to the free nations of our continent—looked very bad. And this is last, but not least—the fact that we've been able to overcome that part of our

history is something we owe last, but not least, to our American friends.

Allow me to say that all American Presidents since Harry S. Truman, up to the present President, William Jefferson Clinton, by showing their support, by expressing their friendship, by extending the hand of partnership, have prepared the ground for German reunification.

We have come together at an historic site, a site where the memory of Frederick the Great is very much alive. This is where he was buried. He was a man who enjoyed high esteem in the United States because he was an enlightened spirit, a cosmopolitan, liberal-minded person. He was the first to sign the first Prussian trade and commerce agreement with the United States, then newly independent. So I think it is apt that we meet here today, on the threshold of the next century at a moment where we in Europe have taken decisions on the introduction of a single European currency, at a moment where we are about to build the European house, a house that is big enough for all European nations to have a room in it, but also a house—and that is very much a German wish—where our American friends will have a permanent right of residence.

The American President, my friend Bill Clinton, when visiting Berlin, said, “The Americans have come here, and they will stand by you today and forever.” He said, “America is on your side, now and forever.” And I think that that is a practical expression of a policy that serves peace, that wants to establish freedom for all nations, that wants to offer opportunities for future generations to continue to live in peace and freedom. And that was the purpose of our talks today. We talked about the topical issues, about what is going on in the world right now, and we talked about how we can make a contribution to peace and freedom. This is also the purpose, Mr. President, of the many meetings that we have, more or less continuously. We talk on the phone; we meet very often. And I hope that that practice will continue.

Once again, I bid you a very warm welcome, Mr. President.

President Clinton. First let me thank the Chancellor for another opportunity to come to Germany to represent the United States and to enjoy his wonderful hospitality and the friendship that he has had for the American people and for me. I have particularly enjoyed having

the opportunity to come to Potsdam today to talk about the next 50 years of history between the United States and Germany and a united Europe—a much different and more hopeful conversation than the one President Truman had here over 50 years ago.

Before I say more about our discussions, I think it is important that I make a comment about the nuclear tests by India. I believe they were unjustified. They clearly create a dangerous new instability in their region. And as a result, in accordance with United States law, I have decided to impose economic sanctions against India.

I have long supported deepening the relations between the United States and India. This is a deeply disappointing thing for me, personally. The First Lady and our daughter had a wonderful trip there; I have stayed in regular touch with the leaders of India for the last 5 years; I have looked forward to a very bright and different future. But the nuclear tests conducted by India, against the backdrop of 149 nations signing the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, demand an unambiguous response by the United States.

It is important that we make clear our categorical opposition. We will ask other countries to do the same.

I hope the Indian Government soon will realize that it can be a very great country in the 21st century without doing things like this. Chancellor Kohl and I just talked about our conversations and efforts with President Yeltsin. I’m hoping that the Russian Duma will soon ratify START II so we can go on to START III and continue to dramatically reduce the nuclear threat in the 21st century. It simply is not necessary for a nation that will soon be the world’s most populous nation—it already has the world’s largest middle class—that has 50 years of vibrant democracy, a perfectly wonderful country, it is not necessary for them to manifest national greatness by doing this. It is a terrible mistake.

I hope that India will instead take a different course now. I hope they will adhere without conditions to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. And as I mentioned to the Pakistani Prime Minister, Mr. Sharif, today, I also urge India’s neighbors not to follow the dangerous path India has taken. It is not necessary to respond to this in kind.

Now, let me say just a few other words about the relationship between the United States and Germany, about which Chancellor Kohl spoke so movingly. When I was here in 1994, we talked about our shared vision for a united Europe and a strong United States-European partnership in the 21st century. I think it's fair to say that the progress that has been made in the years since is greater than we would have imagined just 4 years ago.

Europe is increasingly integrating around the commitment to democracy, open markets, and security alliances. Europe's East is joined more closely than ever before to the West. Some of the most seemingly intractable conflicts on this continent, in Bosnia and Northern Ireland, are giving way to peace and cooperation. All that has happened in the last 4 years.

And Chancellor, I believe that Europe has come so far in so little time in no small measure because of your leadership for German unification, for European Monetary Union, for freedom in free markets, and an undivided democratic Europe at peace. The world is in your debt, and America is pleased about the prospects for our common future because of what has happened.

We talked a lot today about what we have to do now to continue this process of integration and to strengthen our transatlantic partnership. I'm delighted that both our countries have ratified the invitation of NATO to Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Poland to become our new members. I also believe the United States should continue to support other efforts at European unity, including EU enlargement, including the historic decision this month of 11 European countries including Germany to establish the European Monetary Union. A strong and stable Europe with open markets and healthy growth is good for the world, and it is certainly good for America.

We also talked a lot about the importance of Russia and Ukraine; their success is critical to our future security. We strongly support Russian reform, and both of us are looking forward, as I indicated earlier, to talking to President Yeltsin in a few days in Birmingham.

Finally, let me say we're quite concerned about the crisis in Kosovo. The news that President Milosevic and Dr. Rugova will meet this week to start a dialog without preconditions is a sober first step toward resolving a very dan-

gerous conflict. And we want them to make good on their commitment to serious dialog.

Let me just say one other thing. I want to thank the Chancellor for his emphasis and his urging to me to do more to promote people-to-people exchanges between the United States and Germany. That will be even more important as we enter the new century. I'm pleased the American Academy in Berlin will open its doors in the fall, bringing our artists and cultural leaders to Germany for study. I'm working closely with Congress to get the funds to begin construction of our new embassy in Berlin just as soon as possible, so that when the German Government takes up its work in Germany's new capital, it will have an American partner in place and ready to do business.

Chancellor, thank you again for the warmth of your welcome and the depth of your friendship to the United States. I'm glad to be back.

Nuclear Proliferation in South Asia

Q. Mr. President, President Clinton, the Indians have answered your warnings of yesterday with two more nuclear blasts today. What does that tell you about India's intentions and your ability to influence them?

President Clinton. Well, I don't know about my ability to influence them. I just know what the United States law requires, and it's a very stiff sanctions law. It basically says, no more aid. It requires us to vote against aid for India in the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank and other international fora. It cuts off export credits and basically says we can't do anything but ship humanitarian supplies and food. And I think it's a very sad thing.

But I don't think it's too complicated. I believe—they may think that their security requires this, but I think it's more likely, if you just listen to the rhetoric of the party in power, that they believe that they have been underappreciated in the world as a great power. And they think one reason may be that they're not an out-front, out-of-the-closet, open nuclear power.

Well, I think they've been underappreciated in the world and in the United States, myself. They're a very great country. And they will soon be the most populous country in the world. They already have the biggest middle class in the world. Indian-Americans have the highest level of education of any ethnic group in the United States.

But to think that you have to manifest your greatness by behavior that recalls the very worst events of the 20th century on the edge of the 21st century, when everybody else is trying to leave the nuclear age behind, is just wrong. It is just wrong. And they clearly don't need it to maintain their security vis-a-vis China, Pakistan, or anybody else.

So I just think they made a terrible mistake. And I think that we, all of us, have a responsibility to say that and to say that their best days are ahead of them, but they can't—they have to define the greatness of India in 21st century terms, not in terms that everybody else has already decided to reject.

Q. Mr. Chancellor, is Germany going to support sanctions against India and, if so, how?

Chancellor Kohl. Well, we will take a very close look at the sanctions that individual countries are going to take, but there's no doubt whatsoever that the Federal Government—that is to say, that the Germans, who have been traditionally linked in a very close friendship with India and the Indian people, will make it very clear that this was the wrong decision for them to take, that we do not accept that decision, and that we do not see any reason that would justify such a decision and that we are deeply concerned about the positive effect that this decision might have in a region that is already marked by tensions.

The objective of an international peace policy must be to reduce tensions and not to increase tensions. This decision will make a contribution to increasing tensions in the region because it, too, is in a way a direct challenge to the neighboring countries, whether justified or not, but the neighboring countries might react.

Q. Mr. President, how long do you expect the sanctions to remain in place against India? What would it take to lift them? And finally, if Pakistan were to undertake its own nuclear tests, would the United States feel obliged to impose sanctions against it?

President Clinton. If you look at the law as it has been in place since 1994, I believe, we actually have no discretion. In order to lift the sanctions, as I read the law, Congress would have to vote to do it. And the only thing I could do in the Indian situation, for example, is to delay—or any other similar situation—if a nondeclared nuclear state undertakes nuclear testing, under our law the President must impose sweeping sanctions immediately or delay

for up to 30 days to see if something can be worked out. But even if that happens, the President—unlike most of our laws, the President does not have the power to waive. I can just delay for 30 days, during which time the Congress would then have the opportunity to repeal the sanctions or revise them in some way.

And so, I can't answer any of your questions until I have a chance, A, to consult with Congress and, B, to see what the next steps are with India.

Q. Mr. President, did you talk about Turkey?
President Clinton. [Inaudible]—but we have before, but not this time.

Q. Mr. President, there's been a lot of criticism of the U.S. intelligence community and whether or not we knew beforehand of the first series of nuclear tests. Did we know beforehand of this second series of nuclear tests? If not, what does that say? If we did, were we powerless? And in your conversations with the Pakistani Prime Minister, do you have any reason to believe that they will not now follow suit?

President Clinton. Well, that's a lot of questions. Let me say, first of all, on the intelligence question, before this round of tests started, I did not know it was going to start. And I made that clear to all the other people in the region. I don't ever discuss our intelligence operations, and I won't now. I will say that I've asked Director Tenet for a thorough review of them.

Now, on the Pakistani question, let me say, I had a very good, respectful conversation with Prime Minister Sharif. He has tried in the past to reduce tensions between India and Pakistan. I encouraged him to stay on that path. I encouraged him to resist the temptation to respond to an irresponsible act in kind.

I understand the pressures on him at home are probably enormous. You can just imagine how the public feels about it in Pakistan and the kind of ripple, traumatic effect this is having in their country. So I can't say for sure what is going to happen. I can only tell you that we had what I thought was a very good and respectful conversation, and I hope that neither Pakistan nor any other country will respond in kind to this.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Do you blame Netanyahu for the deadlock in the peace process in the Middle East?

President Clinton. Well, my experience in these things, which is mounting up now, indicates that the public placement of blame is not very productive if what you really want to do is get the parties to talk again.

Let me tell you what the facts are. Fifteen months ago we were asked by Prime Minister Netanyahu to explore whether or not there was some way we could facilitate, if you will, an acceleration of the Oslo process, which was embodied in the peace signing in September of '93 in Washington, to move, more or less, immediately to final status talks between the Palestinians and the Israelis.

He pointed out that a lot of these issues were highly contentious, especially for his government, and it would be better to make—to put them all together in one big package and try to make—have as few votes as possible to ratify the process. And I, frankly, thought he had a good idea. I thought it then, and I think it now.

And for a year and some odd months, we have worked very hard to try to find a formula which will enable the parties to take one more step in the process started at Oslo, and then go to final status talks. In other words, we haven't tried to find a formula to resolve all the issues; we've tried to find a formula to get them over the hurdle to get into final status talks. We came up with a set of ideas. In principle, but not in all the details, but in principle, Mr. Arafat accepted them. Mr. Netanyahu was not in a position to do so. He went home to Israel; he asked Mr. Ross, my Middle East Ambassador, to go out there and talk to him. He did. He's coming back now; he's on his way,

or he may already be in the United States. Secretary Albright has stayed behind. They will talk some more.

I'm hoping that we can find an agreement based on the ideas we've presented which will enable these two parties to get together and go into final status talks.

I think, frankly, there is still some mistrust between them. And I think, frankly, there is still some difference of calculation among some of the actors in the Middle East drama about whether they are or are not benefited by a delay, by a stall. I can only tell you that I have seen a lot of doors open and close in the last 5½ years, and my view is that it is neither in Israel's nor the Palestinian Authority's interest to promote delay; that far more bad things are likely to happen than good things by a deliberate strategy of delay.

So I'm hoping that we'll be able to unlock this problem and worry about responsibility in the future and get results now.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 3:48 p.m. on the terrace of Sans Souci Gardens. In his remarks, he referred to President Boris Yeltsin of Russia; Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan; President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); Ibrahim Rugova, leader, Democratic League of Kosovo; Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel; and Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority. Chancellor Kohl spoke in German, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Statement on the Situation in Kosovo *May 13, 1998*

I welcome the news that President Milosevic and Dr. Ibrahim Rugova will meet on May 15 in Belgrade to initiate a dialog without preconditions.

As Ambassadors Holbrooke and Gelbard announced earlier today, the parties have also agreed to continue this dialog in a series of talks in Pristina.

This is a sober first step towards resolving a very dangerous conflict that clearly has the potential to spill over into neighboring countries and destabilize the region.

There is a great deal more to be done, however, before all the peoples of Kosovo enjoy the peace, security, and human rights they deserve. The parties face a complex challenge, but success is up to them. We expect each to make